

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 7, 12-14, 16-18, and 20-23 have been amended. Claims 1-23 therefore are pending and presented for review. Favorable reconsideration and allowance are requested in light of the foregoing amendments and the remarks which follow.

1. Interview Summary

Applicant and applicant's undersigned representative wish to thank Examiner Chin for his courtesy during the personal interview conducted May 23, 2006. During this interview, proposed claim amendments were discussed, and it was ultimately agreed that the claims would appear to be in condition for allowance if amended as now amended. Examiner Chin also indicated that these amendments would likely be entered. Examiner Chin cautioned, however, that he would have to consult with a more senior examiner before allowing the application.

2. Rejections Based on Prior Art

All claims stand rejected over the prior art, principally the Soviet '434 patent in view of the French '502 patent or Gonzales. The only other rejection of note for purposes of this discussion is the rejection of claims 12, 13, 15, 16, and 20, which are additionally rejected in view of Rulison. These rejections, as well as the remaining

rejections, insofar as they may be applied against the amended independent claims, are respectfully traversed.

Each of the independent claims as amended unequivocally recites a “triangulated” gantry, i.e., one having a triangular footprint. The gantry includes first, second, and third booms, horizontal beams functionally interconnecting the booms, and riggings that extend downwardly from the beams. Depending upon the claim at issue, at least one of the beams is linearly extendible to increase the horizontal spacing between two of the booms. (Some of the claims additionally require that more of the beams be extendible.) Each of the claims as amended further requires that each boom include a lift leg that is extendible about a *vertical axis* and a base that is rotatable about the vertical axis to steer the crane. This combination of steerability and boom extendibility and retractability permits the gantry to be maneuvered in tight spaces, such as within a building.

Contrary to the Examiner’s assertions, the Soviet ‘434 patent does not disclose a triangulated gantry. It instead discloses a four legged gantry in which two of the legs (3) are parallel and two of the legs on the opposite side of the gantry extend at an acute angle. To highlight this difference, each of the independent claims has been amended to specify that the lift leg of each of the booms must extend along a *vertical axis*. This defect is not cured by any of the other references cited against the various claims.

In addition, contrary to the Examiner's assertions with respect to claims 12, 13, 15, 16, and 20, there is no motivation to modify the Soviet '434 patent's gantry to be rotatable about a vertical axis to steer the crane as claimed. This is because the Soviet '434 patent discloses a *rail mounted* gantry. The rails 11 and 18 of the Soviet '434 patent are straight, as is typical in these systems. Hence, there is no need to make that gantry be steerable by employing bases that are rotatable about a vertical axis. The Soviet '434 patent therefore teaches away from the proposed modification.

3. Conclusion

In light of the foregoing, withdrawal of the rejections and allowance of the application are believed to be in order and are respectfully requested.

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No fee is believed to be payable with this communication. Should the Examiner consider any fees to be payable in conjunction with this or any future communication, the Director is authorized to direct payment of such fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-1170. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it would help expedite matters.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Timothy E. Newholm', is written over a dotted line that extends from the 'Respectfully submitted,' text.

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